

Often, we tell our children to stay on the right road, to stay out of trouble, and we should—stay focused—but we ought to spread that net of responsibility.

The truth is, poverty is its own violence. Poverty is a violence that traumatizes the mind, oppresses the body, and bruises the human spirit, so that is why the American Rescue Plan is so necessary, so important, and so historic. I am glad that Senators BOOKER, BROWN, and BENNET—I feel a little left out, the odd guy out here—I am glad that we were able to push through, in the American Rescue Plan, a landmark expansion of two tax credit programs: the child tax credit and the earned income tax credit.

Now, I am calling on all my Senate colleagues to join us in making these expansions permanent. By increasing the child tax credit, thousands of more dollars a year will flow into the pockets of the children and families who need it most, cutting poverty—child poverty—nationwide in half.

In Georgia, more than 1 million families with children will benefit from the increased tax refund, and it will lift more than 171,000 Georgia children out of poverty. Those are my neighbors and yours. Those are kids around my church and who attend my church.

So I want to be clear. Not only were we able to expand the tax refund so that more families are getting more money, but we were able to do so in such a way that it gives families a monthly cash payment providing greater financial security.

This is going to be a gamechanger for so many families, especially those who did not previously qualify for the credit when it was used just to offset taxes already owed to the government. Prior to this expansion, we had folk who were too poor to get our help. There is something wrong about that—too poor to get our help. This expansion corrects that. Now, we are putting dollars directly into the hands of the families who need it the most.

In the COVID package, we were able to strengthen the earned income tax credit, nearly tripling the maximum tax refund allowed for qualifying workers because we have to make sure that childless families in our communities also have the support they need to pay their rent, keep food on the table, and more to keep our communities strong.

Taken together, expanding and extending these programs are a major move toward eliminating child poverty and poverty in general once and for all in Georgia and all across our country, but it is still not enough to truly tackle the issue. We have included this in the American Rescue Plan; now, we must make it permanent. As so often is the case, the right thing to do is also the smart thing to do. This will not only help these families, it will help the American economy.

I am just old enough to remember when they started talking about trickle-down economics. I know some com-

munities where they have been waiting for decades for that trickle. It hadn't trickled down; it is trickling up.

The right thing to do is often the smart thing to do. When we help these families, it is actually good economic policy. Because when you help poor families with children, they buy things like food, baby diapers, a coat for their kid, and it helps the American economy.

The right thing to do is the smart thing to do. If Congress can slash child poverty for 1 year, why wouldn't we or shouldn't we do it once and for all? And so I urge the Senate to stand up and do this work in this moral moment in America.

In just a few days, I will go home. I will stand up, and I will preach on Easter Sunday morning. This year, as it turns out, Easter is on April 4. It is the anniversary of Dr. King's death. So I will be thinking about Dr. King as I preach this coming Easter because Dr. King spent his last birthday, January 15, 1968, in his office, at our church, among other things, planning the Poor People's Campaign, trying to organize us and get us ready to stand up against poverty. He spent his birthday thinking about other people's children because he understood that his children would not be OK until other people's children were OK.

April 4 is his birthday. April 4 is also Easter this year. Let's make these tax credits permanent and resurrect hope and possibility and promise for all of America's children.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). The majority leader is recognized.

NATIONAL NATIVE PLANT MONTH

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 109.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 109) designating April 2021 as "National Native Plant Month".

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 109) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 15, 2021, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

REMEMBERING THE 5TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TERRORIST ATTACKS AT BRUSSELS AIRPORT AND THE MAALBEEK METRO STATION IN BELGIUM

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Foreign Relations be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 130.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 130) remembering the 5th anniversary of the terrorist attacks at Brussels Airport and the Maalbeek metro station in Belgium and honoring the victims of the terrorist attacks.

There being no objection, committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 130) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 23, 2021, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NATIONAL POISON PREVENTION WEEK

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 144, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 144) recognizing the week of March 21 through March 27, 2021, as "National Poison Prevention Week" and encouraging communities across the United States to raise awareness of the dangers of poisoning and promote poison prevention.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 144) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

NATIONAL ASBESTOS AWARENESS WEEK

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 145, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 145) designating the first week of April 2021 as “National Asbestos Awareness Week”.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 145) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

RECOGNIZING THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF GREECE AND CELEBRATING DEMOCRACY IN GREECE AND THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 17, S. Res. 34.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 34) recognizing the 200th anniversary of the independence of Greece and celebrating democracy in Greece and the United States.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I come to the floor in honor of an historic occasion: the 200th anniversary of Greece’s independence. I am delighted to join the Greek-American community in New Jersey and across the United States in celebrating this bicentennial. The bonds of friendship between the United States and Greece are unbreakable, and as I stand here, in the center of American democracy, I am reminded of the strength of the shared democratic values on which our long partnership is based.

Greece has made incredible contributions to the world, not least of which is developing the ideals of democracy and rule of law that inspired our Founding Fathers to establish our American system of government. The very architecture of the Capitol building is a tribute to the foundational role Greece played in the shaping of our democracy and society. The democratic ideals developed in ancient Greece continue to motivate Americans and people around the world today.

The people of the United States in turn worked to support the people of Greece as they began their own struggle for independence 200 years ago.

American Philhellene Committees, comprised of ordinary Americans, sprung up to support the Greek fight for freedom through fundraising and humanitarian assistance.

Members of Congress, including Daniel Webster applauded “the struggle of an interesting and gallant people . . . contending against fearful odds . . . for the common privilege of human nature.” In a letter to Greek scholar Adamantios Koraes, whose work formed the intellectual basis for the Greek independence struggle, Thomas Jefferson demonstrated his support by writing that “no people sympathise more feelingly than ours with the sufferings of your countrymen, none offer more sincere and ardent prayers to heaven for their success.”

Several American Philhellenes traveled to Greece to assist the Greek people more directly. Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, who later became a prominent voice in America’s fight to end slavery, served with the Greek army as a surgeon and a soldier. Jonathan Peckham Miller, another future noted abolitionist, also served in the Greek army. George Jarvis fought alongside the Greek people, as well as working to provide food, medicine, and clothing to those who needed it with the support of the American Philhellene Committees.

The bonds between the peoples and governments of Greece and the United States have lasted throughout our countries’ long history and are stronger than ever today. Greece is an invaluable partner to the United States as a NATO member, as an EU member, and in promoting peace and stability in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean region. Greece’s unwavering commitment to democracy and the rule of law makes it a truly reliable ally in the region and an increasingly critical one as we face the challenges of the 21st century.

I am proud that Congress demonstrated its support for further boosting U.S.-Greece cooperation and U.S. support for the Greece-Cyprus-Israel trilateral, with the passage of the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act a little over a year ago. Ensuring full implementation of this act is one of my priorities as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee.

The past few years have seen critical developments in U.S.-Greece relations. I am grateful to the leadership of officials in both countries whose work has helped U.S.-Greece ties reach their strongest level ever, including Ambassador Geoff Pyatt, and I look forward to building on their fantastic efforts in the months and years to come.

This 200th anniversary of Greece’s independence truly is a time to celebrate: a time to celebrate Greece’s hard-won freedom; a time to celebrate the bonds between our peoples, and especially the many contributions Greek Americans have made to this country; and a time to celebrate our countries’ shared history and democratic values,

which will be the basis of our countries’ cooperation for years to come.

This week, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously approved a resolution congratulating the people of Greece on the 200th anniversary of their independence. I am grateful to Senator BARRASSO for joining me in leading this resolution and to my many Senate colleagues on both sides of the aisle who have cosponsored this resolution. With the passage of this resolution every year, Congress—and, through us, the American people—send a clear message of support for the Greek people and our countries’ enduring partnership.

Greece’s 200th independence anniversary serves not only as a reminder of our countries’ long friendship, but also as a time for us to look to build on that history and strengthen our partnership for generations to come. The Eastern Mediterranean region and the world face unprecedented challenges, and growing the U.S.-Greece relationship is more critical than ever for our shared security and stability. I look forward to working with the people of Greece and the Greek-American community to make the vision of an even stronger U.S.-Greece relationship a reality.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 34) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 4, 2021, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair announces, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to Public Law 70-770, the appointment of the following individual to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission: The Honorable JOHN BOOZMAN of Arkansas.

The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Public Law 94-304, as amended by Public Law 99-7, appoints the following Senators as members of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki) during the 117th Congress: The Honorable ROGER WICKER of Mississippi; The Honorable JOHN BOOZMAN of Arkansas; The Honorable MARCO RUBIO of Florida; and The Honorable THOM TILLIS of North Carolina.

The Chair announces, on behalf of the Republican Leader, pursuant to Public Law 101-509 the reappointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress: Deborah Skaggs of Kentucky.

The Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, pursuant to the provisions of